

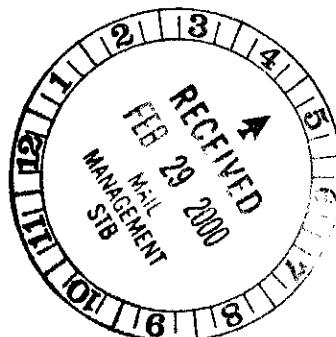
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COOPER TIRE & RUBBER COMPANY

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Secretary
U.S. Surface Transportation Board
1825 K Street, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20423-0001



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Mr. Secretary,

I am writing to express some concerns regarding the Burlington Northern/Sante Fe Railroad's proposed merger with the Canadian National. As a shipper of raw materials from the Texas/Louisiana area, I am very concerned about the operations of the BNSF. We have many suppliers whose cargo originates at BNSF served facilities. I currently ship with the BNSF, UP, CSX, NS, and the CN. I have found that they BNSF is already one of the two hardest railroads to deal with operationally.

Cooper Tire and Rubber has also lived through the UP/SP merger and its service disruptions that caused one of our plants to shut down in 1998. We are in the midst of the NS/Conrail/CSX problems now. We have seen service delays, bunching, and miserable customer service response. I find that the rail movements I have are the highest maintenance moves I have. I have been forced to shift freight to truck in key areas of the Northeast, and am losing my patience with rail to the point where I am evaluating all rail moves for the corporation.

We currently ship 4,000 railcars per year, but that number is shrinking. We are not opposed to the merger, per se, but think the STB has an obligation to get the loose ends tied up on the NS/CSX and even the UP/SP before it allows for even more disruption up of the status quo.

I am sure that the STB is already taking all these factors into consideration, and I am hopeful that you will make the wise decision in this matter. I would like to leave you with the suggestion that bigger is not always better, especially if service suffers.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Darin King".

Darin King
Corporate Logistics Buyer
Cooper Tire and Rubber